

Russian parties angry over threat

MOSCOW (R) — Political groups in Russia erupted in fury Tuesday over a call by a top aide of President Boris Yeltsin for two leading parties to be banned from next month's election because they criticised a proposed new constitution. "Are we just supposed to applaud it (the constitution)?" a spokesman for the Communist Party asked angrily. And the leader of a pro-reform electoral bloc, which has also expressed doubts about the huge powers the president will enjoy under the draft national charter, said he would continue to discuss publicly the issues that "electors deem necessary." Liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky said in a statement: "The current leaders are losing even the elementary notion of democracy. If we fail to notice that, then the next step from authoritarian rule to dictatorship will be soon with us." The central electoral commission was meeting Tuesday to consider the call by First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeiko for the Communist Party and the Democratic Party of Russia, a prominent centrist group, to be removed from the list of parties taking part in the Dec. 12 poll.

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AMMAN WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1993, JUMADA AL THANI 17, 1414

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Estonian president due here tomorrow

AMMAN (Petra) — The president of Estonia and his wife will arrive here Thursday on a four-day official visit to Jordan for talks with His Majesty King Hussein on Arab, regional and international issues as well as bilateral relations. The Estonian leader will visit archaeological sites and places of cultural and historical importance.

Unit off to Croatia

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday saw off a new batch of Jordanian Armed Forces personnel who left for Croatia to join the United Nations peacekeeping forces there.

Senate elects panel rapporteurs

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament's (Senate) permanent committee Tuesday met under the chairmanship of Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi and elected the committee's rapporteurs. The committee selected Zeid Rifai, Ahmad Tarawneh, Kamal Shaer and Marwan Hinoud as rapporteurs of the foreign affairs, legal, financial and administrative committees respectively.

Qaisi promoted

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Tuesday promoting director of the General Intelligence Department Mustafa Al Qaisi to the rank of general.

Gulf Arabs discuss aid for self-rule

RIYADH (AFP) — Deputy foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) met here Tuesday to discuss the GCC's financial contribution to Palestinian autonomy. An official close to the meeting said a document would be drawn up on the Middle East peace process and financing Palestinian autonomy, to be submitted to the next GCC summit in Riyadh on Dec. 20.

French military official visits Qatar

DOHA (AP) — A high-ranking French military official held talks Tuesday with Qatari leaders on strengthening defence relations between the two countries, the Qatar News Agency said. General Marc Monchall, chief of staff of French land forces, met Qatar's defence minister, Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani, who is also the crown prince and the emir's commander-in-chief. The agency said discussions dealt with enhancing defence coordination and cooperation. But it gave no details.

U.N. inquiry team arrives in Somalia

MOGADISHU (AFP) — A three-man commission appointed by the U.N. secretary general to investigate the killing of United Nations peacekeepers in Somalia arrived here Tuesday. U.N. officials said the commission's chairman, Matthew Ngulube, invited Somalia leaders "with pertinent information" to volunteer to depose to the commission. Mr. Ngulube is the chief justice of Zambia. "The commission will examine all activities involving U.N. SOM II that have contributed to casualties both to (U.N.) personnel as well as to Somali nationals," Mr. Ngulube said.

Holst hospitalised

OSLO (AP) — Foreign Minister Johan Jorgen Holst has been hospitalised, probably for exhaustion, after a period of intense activity that included brokering a Middle East peace agreement. The foreign minister, 56, was admitted to the neurological department of the national hospital in Oslo for tests. State Foreign ministry spokesman Ingvard Havnen said Tuesday: "He is feeling much better," said Mr. Havnen. "It was most likely overexertion, but we cannot exclude that it was a virus or something until the tests are over."

Autonomy talks make progress on detainees

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israeli and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiators made progress on the key issue of the release of Palestinian prisoners at autonomy talks on Tuesday but major stumbling blocks remained.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Nabil Shaath said the Israelis had submitted a detailed timetable for the release of all the prisoners, who number almost 11,000, according to humanitarian aid officials.

He indicated that the figure included about 1,200 held for "blood crimes," whom Israel had until now refused to release, insisting that they must all complete their sentences.

The two sides are trying to reach agreement on implementation of the Palestinian autonomy deal by a Dec. 13 deadline for the start of the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Palestinian sources said the talks could wind up Tuesday and resume next week. The latest session was held against a backdrop of widespread violence in Gaza, where troops shot and wounded around 80 Palestinian demonstrators (see story below).

Mr. Shaath has said repeatedly he will not sign an accord on the autonomy arrangements without a timetable and written pledge that all Palestinian prisoners will be released.

The newspaper said Mr. Rabin offered to recognise the Palestinian flag, anthem and uniforms — symbols of the independent state the PLO wants to establish and which Israel opposes.

Mr. Rabin also proposed building small airports, perhaps only for helicopters, in Jericho and Gaza, and establishing a Palestinian hunk and a stick.

Mr. Rabin's spokesman Oded Ben-Ami had at first declined to confirm or deny the report in the newspaper Ayeletot Ahroneh.

But several hours later Mr. Rabin's office issued a denial.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has not sent any message whatsoever — written or oral — to Yasser Arafat and

(Continued on page 5)



Palestinian youth throw stones at Israeli soldiers in Ramallah Tuesday (AFP photo)

Israel, PLO strike deal to calm Gaza tensions

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) struck a deal to try to cool the explosive situation in Gaza where troops shot 80 Palestinians Tuesday, a Fatah leader said.

The accord came after senior army officers twice met top members of the mainstream PLO movement Fatah after trouble erupted in response to an Israeli crackdown on activists the AFP said.

"There is an agreement on the practical steps that the Israeli authorities and the army must take to cool the situation down," said Sufian Abu Zaydah, a member of the Fatah "high committee" in Gaza.

"We hope to see these steps carried out in the coming days," he said after the talks, which the Israeli defence ministry called after Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin urged the army to "calm things down."

Mr. Abu Zaydah and five other Fatah officials met Israel's southern region military commander General Matan Vilnai and senior officers at the Erez checkpoint into the Gaza Strip.

"We talked about the problem of the arrests in recent days and the broader question of Palestinian prisoners," he said, but refused what steps would be taken.

Military officials said they refused a demand for the release of Tayseer Bardini, the

chief of Fatah's armed wing, who was captured on Monday.

Mr. Abu Zaydah had earlier met several army officers in the military administration headquarters in Gaza City.

Israel has given an amnesty to some Hawks but Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, who is close to Mr. Rabin, told Israeli radio the fight against them was not over.

Mr. Ben-Eliezer said Israel would "continue to pursue and to catch, whether in battle or a physical fight, every guerrilla and fugitive with bloody hands."

Thousands of Palestinians burnt tyres and threw stones and fire-bombs at soldiers protest at the army's killing on Sunday of a member of PLO chairman Yasser Arafat Fatah.

But left-wing Israeli deputy Dedi Zucker told AFP that the army was "totally losing control."

"We will continue military action until our leader Tayseer Bardini is released and until Israel stops pursuing us," said Salim Muwafiq, a senior Hawk who escaped arrest Monday.

Fatah activists, enraged by the latest army actions, have vowed to renew armed attacks against Israelis and ordered a three-day mourning strike throughout the Gaza Strip.

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King receives Pentagon official

AMMAN (I.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday received Frank Wisner, assistant secretary for policy at the U.S. Defence Department, who is leading a high-level defence delegation on a visit to the Middle East.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the King exchanged views with Mr. Wisner on regional and international issues as well as Jordanian-American relations.

The audience was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Abdul Hafez Mira.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali held talks with Mr. Wisner in a meeting attended by Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Al Anani.

The delegation arrived here Tuesday as part of a 13-day tour of the Middle East.



His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday meet with

Frank Wisner, assistant secretary for policy at the U.S. Defence Department (Petra photo)

Department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs and the U.S. Central Command.

A senior Pentagon official said last week that the mission will focus its talks on defining strategic requirements as well as current and future security threats (see page 3).

Christopher faces tough task in Damascus

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher faces a tough mission when he visits Syria during a tour to get Middle East peace rolling again, Syrian sources said.

PLO sources said Mr. Christopher's visit on Sunday is the "toughest mission he has had in the region since he joined (President Bill) Clinton's foreign affairs team 11 months ago," the official English-language daily Syria Times said.

Officials and diplomats said Mr. Christopher would hold talks in Damascus with President Hafez Al Assad and Foreign Minister Farouq Al Shara on how to resume Israel-Syria talks in Washington, suspended since mid-September.

Syria and Israel have held 11 rounds of talks since the opening of the U.S.-led Middle East peace conference in Madrid two years ago but have made no tangible progress towards peace.

Syria had threatened to boycott the next round of talks if Israel did not pledge to withdraw fully from the strategic Golan Heights, a plateau seized by Israel in the 1967 war.

Mr. Christopher will be confronted with difficulties arising from implementation of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord signed in Washington in September, the Syria Times said.

It urged the secretary to press Israel to announce its readiness to withdraw from the occupied Golan Jands.

"He (Christopher) should not press for any more concessions from the Arabs because they did give all that is needed to make the process of peace moving. His aim should be the other side this time, and all his attention should be concentrated on Israel," the Syria Times said.

"The Arabs are still counting on the Clinton administration's keenness to make Christopher's visit a success and to secure the U.S. image as an honest broker and a full partner," the paper said.

It said Syria would reject any Israeli pledge to withdraw partially from the Golan Heights and said the Jewish state should announce its readiness to withdraw fully from the Golan to pave the way for resumption of negotiations.

"The army is involved in a vendetta," charged Mr. Zucker, a member of the Meretz party, a government coalition partner. "Any officer in an undercover unit has become a decision-maker and they are totally cut off from the peace process."

Witnesses said soldiers fired indiscriminately at anything that moved. One witness said he saw 15 people hit by plastic or rubber-coated bullets.

Jerome Delav, chief photographer of the Associated Press, was hit in the leg by a rubber bullet while covering the demonstrations in Khan Yunis, Gaza City and the refugee camps of Jabalia, Shati,

and Maghazi.

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Arafat comes under renewed criticism over self-rule talks

TUNIS (AP) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leaders met on Tuesday to discuss the faltering self-rule talks with Israel as Yasser Arafat came under attack even from old-time allies over his handling of the negotiations.

PLO sources said Mr. Arafat called for an emergency meeting of the PLO Executive Committee after the latest blast of criticism.

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said committee member Mahmoud Abbas — who signed the accord with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in Washington on Sept. 13 — had expressed his discontent over Mr. Arafat's handling of the negotiations.

If their reports are correct, Mr. Abbas would be the highest-ranking PLO official to challenge Mr. Arafat over the latest blast of criticism.

Before the Executive Committee gathered, Suliman Najaah, a veteran committee member, said he was boycotting the discussions, which he described as "useless."

Mr. Najaah, who leads of the Palestinian People's Party — the former communists — accused Mr. Arafat of making decisions alone, without consulting the committee.

"As past experience has shown it is useless to take part in these meetings, whose resolutions are totally ignored by the peace deal with Israel."

Earlier in the day, Mr. Arafat also met with two Israeli envoys in a fresh effort to end the deadlock in negotiations.

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Sanctions on Libya will have limited effect

By Elie Auster
Agence France Presse

NICOSIA — New U.N. sanctions against Libya which take effect Wednesday will like up consumer prices but oil sales, the country's main source of revenue, will not be affected immediately, diplomats and economists say.

"Libyans have had plenty of time to sell back their assets or transfer them to other countries under pseudonyms," one diplomat said.

A European ambassador contacted from Cyprus said it would not be easy to "paralyse" European factories partly owned by Libyans.

The U.N. Security Council on Nov. 11 ordered a freeze on Libyan assets abroad and an embargo on deliveries of oil-related equipment to take effect in Dec. 1.

The new sanctions come on top of a ban on air traffic and arms sales imposed to force Libya to hand over two suspects wanted by the United States and Britain over the bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988. The bombing killed 270 people.

Prices had increased dramatically in Libya since the United Nations slapped an air and arms embargo on the country April 1992, the European ambassador in Tripoli said. "Certain subsidised goods are hard to find and the dinar is

only worth 50 cents on the open market against three dollars at the official rate," he explained.

An Arab economist meant while said Libya lacked the financial and agricultural resources of a country such as Iraq, and the new sanctions would eventually affect the Libyans' standard of living and "exacerbate the crisis."

In the run-up to the December deadline Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi has delivered vitriolic speeches to crowds of Libyans, reaffirming his refusal to budge over the two suspects.

On Friday he again vowed never to bow to international pressure to hand them over for trial.

He said the Lockerbie affair was "only a pretext to make the Libyan people bend," and Tripoli was prepared to confront the West for decades and even set fire to its oil wells.

The impact of the new sanctions may be limited in the short term because the freeze on Libyan assets abroad, estimated at between \$4 and \$5 billion, will be hard to implement, with little to distinguish individual from state deposits, diplomats say.

The Nicosia-based newsletter Middle East Economic Survey (MEE) said countries where the Libyan company Oilinvest had handed over most of its capital in European partners would find it hard to

freeze the assets held by subsidiaries in Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Spain and Hungary.

However, Tripoli will be deprived of dividends on its investments.

MEE said that besides assets transferred to the Gulf and Asia, Libya has stockpiled oil equipment listed in the new embargo.

In the medium and short term, "this equipment must be bought through intermediaries, and as with an embargo, it will be accessible but will cost more," an oil expert said.

Offshore companies set up by Libyans in third countries have been importing banned goods into Libya since 1986, when U.S. high technology was first embargoed and Libyan assets in the United States were frozen.

Libyans in general "want to live in peace and finish with this conflict that complicates their lives," the European ambassador said.

Former U.S. President Ronald Reagan ordered air raids on Tripoli and Benghazi in 1986 which killed 37 and injured 93, in retaliation for a bombing of a discotheque in West Berlin frequented by U.S. soldiers.

In current talks on Palestinian autonomy, negotiations on Jerusalem were put off for a year.

"I am worried about ideological trends and ideas in the new leadership that could harm the delicate fabric of relations between Arabs and Jews," said the white-haired Kollek, 82, dressed in a smart blue suit and tie.

Mr. Kollek, affiliated with the ruling Labor Party, worked tirelessly for Arab-Jewish coexistence during his administration.

Opposition members of the council said they feared Mr. Olmert would provoke the 150,000 Palestinian residents of the city by encouraging nationalist Jews to settle in Arab neighbourhoods, something Mr. Olmert has already condoned.

Mr. Olmert, 48, was elected on a campaign focused on Mr. Kollek's advanced age and cutting a last-minute deal with leaders of the city's sizable ultra-orthodox Jewish population.

Mr. Olmert and orthodox council members quoted extensively from psalms and Jewish prayers at Monday's city council meeting.

Mindful of plans by Mr. Olmert's nationalist and religious coalition partners to try to expand Jewish settlement in Jerusalem, Palestinian leader Faisal Husseini, set up a shadow committee last week to monitor the Arab side of the city.

Alluding to Palestinian claims on the city, Mr. Olmert, 48, said that "peaceful relations between us and our neighbours will not take place unless they recognise our deep attachment as a nation to Jerusalem."

He said that a "correct balance" could enable "a form of political solution to our historic conflict with the Arab nations and the Palestinians."

"This balance can in no way be based on any denial of Jewish sovereignty over all of Jerusalem," Mr. Olmert added.

Although Mr. Schocken refused to give figures, the radio put the tabloid's circulation at only 10,000, and said losses in its nearly 10 years of publication were estimated at \$20 million.

Mr. Olmert pledged to safeguard religious freedom and said Israelis "must cultivate relations based on respect, tolerance and consideration with the non-Jewish residents of our city," he said.

Still, Mr. Olmert added, "Arabs should be helped to further their quality of life."

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Ban on non-kosher meat saved Rabin

TEL AVIV (AP) — A proposed ban on importing non-kosher meat into Israel saved Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's peace plan on Monday.

The main opposition Likud Party brought a motion of non-confidence based on the recent spike of violence in the occupied territories. The Likud, joined by three smaller right-wing parties, says the violence demonstrates that the Sept. 13 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (IPL) is a sham.

But it was easily defeated 48 to 33 with three abstentions. The remaining 36 legislators were not present.

Israel Radio reported that two smaller ultra-religious parties, United Torah Judaism and the National Religious Party, abstained in order to win the vote in exchange for a cabinet decision Sunday to legislate against the importation of non-

kosher meat into Israel. Meretz, command 56 seats out of 120 in Israel's parliament. They are guaranteed the support of five other legislators who belong to Arab parties, giving the government a narrow majority of 61.

But Mr. Rabin has said he wants to see peace-related votes pass by a wide margin to give the process credibility and clear the way for further negotiations.

Shas and United Torah control 10 seats, which will keep Mr. Rabin in the clear if they abstain.

A legislative ban was unnecessary until Mr. Rabin announced plans to privatise the importation of meat this fall. Government companies import strictly kosher but did not control all of the market.

The privatisation moves led religious parties to demand

that Mr. Rabin institutionalise the ban on non-kosher meat.

Mr. Rabin's cabinet banned the importation of non-kosher meat this summer, but the supreme court overruled the ban on appeal from importers and civil rights groups, saying it violated basic laws guaranteeing free trade.

Sunday's cabinet decision meant the government will introduce legislation in the coming months modifying the appropriate basic laws, which are formulated to serve as a de facto constitution and are less likely than ordinary laws to be overturned by the high court.

The end result will likely mean that small amounts of non-kosher meat currently entering the country without government supervision will be stopped.

It is still permitted to raise pork within Israel although religious parties are seeking a ban on this practice, as well.

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Home News

JORDAN TIMES, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1993 3

Crown Prince calls for planning youth activities via closer interaction with social dimensions

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday said that sports and youth activities should be closely linked to and interact with social dimensions and not be planned from behind desks, inside closed offices.

"We cannot continue raising the slogan 'the human person is our most precious possession' at a time when our knowledge about that person is superficial because of our total divorce from reality and actual situations," he said.

The Crown Prince was addressing the winners of the Crown Prince Golden Award for outstanding activities in voluntary fields during 1993.

Youth activities that can achieve their specific objectives are those which originate with the young people themselves, free of any bureaucratic constraints or limitations, or coming from offices far from the real situation on the ground, said Prince Hassan.

The winners of the Golden Award have had sufficient opportunities to identify and get to know the land as well as the people living in this land thanks to their interaction with the various social sectors during their competition for the Golden Award, said Prince Hassan.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday addresses winners of the Crown Prince Golden Award (Petra photo)

It is hoped that the winners would form a nucleus of a larger group of youth to be involved in a wider youth movement in Jordan, he added.

The Crown Prince proposed the formation of an association of the winners of the Golden

Award "if such an association can play a basic role in promoting the values and objectives of the Crown Award and in stimulating youth activities in voluntary and social fields."

He urged the group to maintain contacts with the other participants and winners of the

award to achieve this purpose.

The winners of the 1993 Golden Award are 24 youths who were awarded their certificates by Prince Hassan on Nov. 21.

The group brings to 93 the total number of young men and women who have received the Golden Award to date.

Visiting high-level U.S. defence officials to reaffirm security commitments, explore possible collective arrangement

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A high-level U.S. Defence Department delegation began a visit to Jordan as part of a Middle East mission described by Washington as aimed at reaffirming long-standing U.S. security commitments to the region and exploring possibilities of a collective arrangement for security.

The delegation, led by Frank Wisner, assistant secretary of defence, was expected to be received by His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali and other senior government leaders.

On Tuesday, the team was received by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Abdul Hafez Mira'i Al Kaabneh, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The agency said Gen. Kaabneh and the visitors exchanged views on "the situation in the region" and discussed "means of cooperation and coordination." It did not give details.

Briefing reporters on the delegation's 13-day trip to the Middle East, a senior Pentagon official said last week that the region's countries needed "to hear directly from the new administration about the importance of the U.S. attaches to them."

Officials said the objective of the visit was to explore ways and means to translate the reality of the end of the cold war and progress in the Middle East peace process into collective arrangements to counter potential security threats to the region's countries as well as U.S. interests.

The discussions the delegation will have with the leaders of Jordan, Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states

will focus on the planned restructuring of U.S. defence forces announced by Defense Secretary Les Aspin in mid-September.

European military experts noted that with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the defence treaties that the U.S. has already signed with Kuwait and other Gulf states, Washington could now afford to reduce its physical military presence in the Middle East. That is one of the main regional impacts of the restructuring announced by Mr. Aspin.

The delegation will review "strategic requirements as well as current and future security threats" in the Middle East.

According to the Pentagon official, the delegation was to urge Middle Eastern leaders to "establish priorities in ways that make sense, not only for their own defence but in terms of mutual cooperation in the region."

In general terms, the mission's goal, as described by the Pentagon official, is to set the stage for a "new era of coop-

eration with a region that we have long determined is vital to U.S. national interests."

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Military training joint exer-

cises, inter-operability of equipment and doctrines and possibly the prepositioning of troops and material in the region could be the means to achieve this end, the official said.

Depending on the results of the delegation's mission, the official said, "a new era of cooperation" could emerge.

The mission is not expected to produce any new treaties, mutual defence pacts, or announcements about military assistance.

The delegation includes Ted E. Warner, assistant secretary of state for defence for strategy, requirements and resources; Frances D. Cook, deputy assistant secretary of state for regional security affairs and security assistance; Molly Williamson, deputy assistant secretary of defence for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs; and Rear Admiral John Michael Leucke, director of plans and policies of the U.S. Central Command.

Mr. Wisner is a former ambassador who served in Egypt and the Philippines.

Ms. Williamson "as the U.S. consul general in Arab East Jerusalem until last year."

Envoy highlights Romania's progress, ties with Jordan, in marking holiday

By Ica Wahbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Romania's National Day today (Wednesday) assumes a special significance as it has reached the venerable age of three-quarters of a century.

Marked on Dec. 1, it celebrates the "great union" of Transylvania with the mother country, in 1918, after years of occupation by the Austro-Hungarian empire.

At a press conference Saturday, Romanian Ambassador to Jordan Anton Pascale reviewed the historical events that led to the much sought after and fought for union, long the dream of a people whose cultural, military, economic and spiritual ties ensured the national identity of a people who could not be kept apart by any borders.

"The anniversary of 75 years since the great union is also an occasion for us to celebrate the progress the country has registered in democratising the political and social life, the passage to the market economy and attaining industrial restructuring based on the principles of economic efficiency and utilisation of natural and human resources and of a more proficient Romanian integration in the world economy," said Mr. Pascale.

A contribution to this integration is made by the 1,700 Jordanian-Romanian firms operating in Romania, said the ambassador, adding that the volume of bilateral commercial exchange in 1992 was 50 per cent higher than that of 1991.

The Romano-Jordanian relationship is an old one; it goes back, to the ambassadorial level, to 1965. In 1968 the two countries signed a trade and cooperation agreement, and ever since, the ties were reinforced by more treaties and visits at all levels.

As recent as last month, Minister of Planning Ziad Fariz visited Romania to attend the 10th meeting of the joint Economic and Technical Cooperation Committee. Two documents were signed on the occasion: the Protocol of the 10th Session and the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement, paving the way for the development of future economic ties.

Ministry unveils loan plan

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Agriculture Tuesday unveiled a plan to help farmers diversify their sources of income and boost their livestock production. The plan has been submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval, according to the Ministry.

The \$19.6 million plan, expected to be implemented at the start of 1994, entails granting soft loans to up to 8,000 small farmers to help them carry out land development of livestock projects in the rural regions, according to the announcement made by Agriculture Minister Marwan Kamal Monday.

The loans would finance the purchase of goats, sheep and cows to boost dairy production and therefore increase the concerned farmers' income, said the minister.

With this project, which is to be implemented over a period of seven years, we hope to raise the living standard of poor families especially those whose bread-winners are women, said Dr. Kamal.

The project also entails helping and encouraging women farmers to increase their field production by providing them with loans to finance the purchase of seed and animal feed and build water storage facilities to irrigate crops and increase cereal production, the minister continued.

He said that part of the allocated sums will finance the expansion of stations located at Wadi Waleh, Dhiban, Kharais and Mafraq districts which serve to the improve the quality of livestock raised in the country.

The loans will be short-term and medium-term loans, depending on the nature of the projects and the types of crops to be produced and will partly cover the cost of purchasing farming equipment, Dr. Kamal added.

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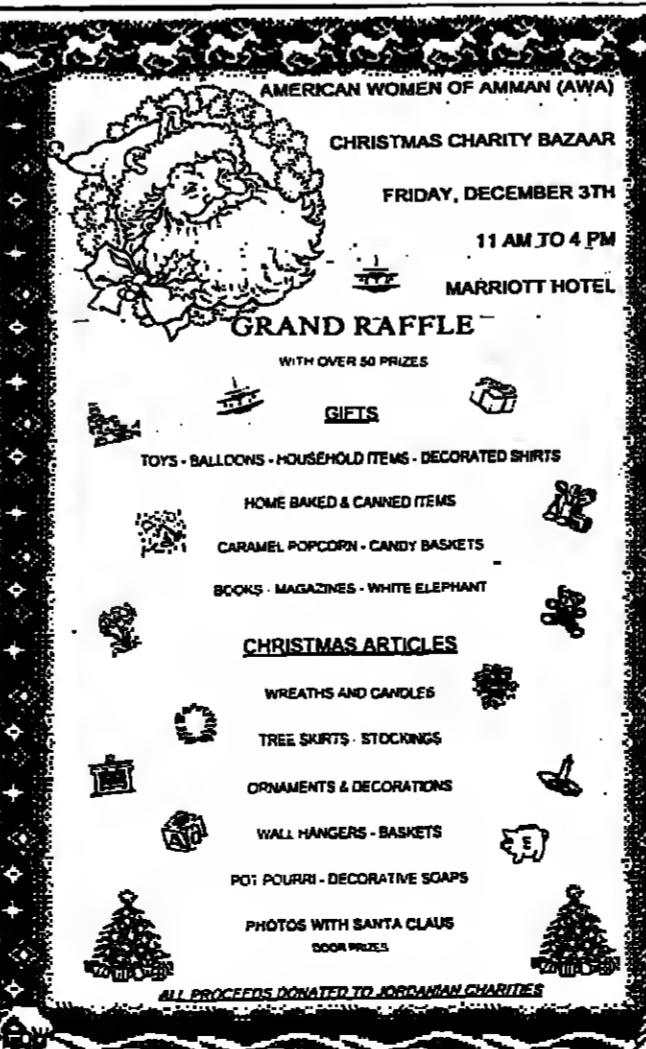
WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Second Jordanian exhibition of cotton and woollen products at the World Exhibition Hall — University Road (11:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.)
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Palestine Throughout History" at the University of Jordan.
- ★ Exhibition of handicrafts at the University of Amman.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Farighi Abdal Hafez at the Balka' Art Gallery in Al Fuheis (10:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 720902).
- ★ Exhibition of ceramics by Iraqi artist Scham Saoudi at Alia Art Gallery (9:00-13:30 and 15:00-18:00) (Tel. 639303).
- ★ Photographic exhibition on the intifada at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.).
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Hammoud Shabout at Baladna Art Gallery (Gardens Street).

FILMS & DRAMAS

- ★ Video film entitled "The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner" at the British Council at 7:00 p.m. (104 minutes).
- ★ Drama in Arabic entitled "The Precious Lady" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 5:00 p.m.



Officials seize 40 artefacts

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian customs officers Tuesday said they seized 40 pieces of artefacts in Jordan out of the country and delivered the items to the Department of Antiquities.

The 40 pieces, which included marble, pottery and metal works excavated from several historic sites in Jordan, were hidden in three wooden crates among bolts of cloth exported to Germany aboard a truck, said Khaled Qutob, director of the Amman Customs Office, who made the announcement.

"We turned over the three crates with their contents to the Department of Antiquities since the law bars the trading and export of Jordanian antiquities," said Mr. Qutob.

Department of Antiquities Director General Sawsan Tell said that among the crates' contents, the department found a white marble statue representing the God of Wisdom in ancient Greece, dating back to the second and third centuries B.C. and a set of 27 pieces of pottery, several jars, lanterns and plates all dating back to the Bronze Age or 3,000 B.C.

The rest of the pieces date back to Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods and a plate of mosaics from the Byzantine Age, according to Dr. Tell.

He said the Department of Antiquities has the authority to confiscate these pieces to be stored and displayed in the country's national museums.

Dr. Tell thanked the Customs Department for its cooperation.

Mr. Qutob said that the priceless merchandise was found loaded on a truck with a Bulgarian licence plate, the vehicle was transporting Jordanian cloth destined for German markets.

He told the Jordan Times that the truck and the cloth were seized pending investigations into the case.

He said that the driver of the truck had to stop at the customs complex south of Amman in order to obtain clearance for travel to Germany, and it was then that customs officers discovered the three crates which were not among the items listed on the truck's manifest.

When questioned about the three crates which the driver, who is Bulgarian, expressed surprise.

said Mr. Qutob.



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A solid approach to a fluid problem

THE FIVE-DAY symposium on water that started Sunday is a timely event that aims to assess the water needs of the Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa. The basic themes of the meeting speak for themselves as far as their interrelations and interdependence are concerned. Surely in the context of the Arab World one cannot discuss "water utilisation and efficiency" in isolation from "water resources, planning and development" or from "regional cooperation and coordination." The organic link between these three principal concerns of the water conference is clear to all those familiar with the water crisis in the Arab World.

Obviously there will come a time when regional cooperation would have to take into consideration, in addition to the Arab countries of the region, both Turkey and Israel; Turkey because it has tremendous water resources that can, under appropriate conditions and circumstances, help in solving the Middle East water problem; and Israel because its impact on the issue has so far been negative due to its encroachment on Arab water rights that led to substantial diminishing of the availability of water resources that are rightfully Arab. In this sense, positive Israeli cooperation in this field is necessary for any meaningful regional approach to the water problem in the region. No wonder one of the most sticking points in the Arab-Israeli peace talks centres on the water dimension. Israel is known to have diverted water resources even from the arid West Bank region in order to satisfy its own needs. This on top of Israel's illegal utilisation of waters from regional rivers or their tributaries, including the Jordan and the Yarmouk as well as the Litani.

In Jordan, meanwhile, this is only one facet that led to the country's water crisis. When more than half of Jordan's production of water goes unaccounted for due principally to pipe leakage, illegal use or unmetered supplies, the extent of the local water problem becomes clearer. A working paper submitted to the symposium said 54 per cent of water supplies in Amman and Zarqa were unaccounted for. And when we take into consideration that the water use in the greater Amman and Zarqa region constitutes 54 per cent of the entire national use, the extent of the domestic problem and its contribution to the water crisis becomes clearer.

There is no sense in solving the water crisis on a regional basis or in terms of proper planning and development when we waste as much as half of our own water resources year after year.

And when it comes to planning, there is nothing simpler than encouraging landlords to construct water wells that can be filled by rain water collected from roof tops. This is the least costly method to save water and replenish the needs of our people in summer. Construction permits can be made conditional on the building of such wells. Even tax incentives can be introduced for this purpose. While we strive to restore our water rights and hope for regional plans that would satisfy the needs of all the states of the region, we should use the time from now until these hopes are realised to rationalise waste at home.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour daily Tuesday discussed the question of Jordanian's obtaining visas to visit their relatives and friends in other Arab countries and said that it is a very complicated process, causing much frustration to the majority of the applicants. Mohammad Kawash said that citizens from the Gulf countries are offered all facilities when they wish to visit Jordan and find no difficulty in obtaining a visa. Likewise, the foreign nationals who come here find no difficulty at all in making the trip as the visa is promptly issued to them on the spot, added the writer. Perhaps the Jordanian government believes that facilitating the issuance of visas to these visitors is part of the policy of attracting tourists to Jordan, but in fact tourism is not progressing and it can only succeed once the essential services for the tourists have been made available, as the majority of people know, added the writer. He said that the government should deal with the foreign nationals on equal terms and should reciprocate their procedures concerning visits to their own countries by Jordanian citizens. He said that this demand is not aimed at creating problems for the visitors of Jordan, but rather to pressure the other governments to treat Jordanians in the same manner it treats non-Jordanians coming to the Kingdom.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily commented on Arbor Day celebrations in January, noting that the Ministry of Agriculture was preparing for the day when tree planting is to take place. Nazih said that previously, the government used to announce public holiday for the Arbor Day, enabling as many people as possible to take part in the tree-planting practice and contribute to the afforestation of the country. The writer said that the ministry is planning to plant 100,000 trees in the national park, to be named Al Hussein National Park, on 1,200 dunums of land, adding that millions of other trees would be planted in other areas, according to the ministry's plans and the current preparations. But he asked what would happen to those trees if the ministry does not come up with the proper means to ensure their growth.

Scandal unveils fraudulent arms procurement, funding Israeli intelligence

By Jane Hunter

SACRAMENTO, CA. — The Rami Dotan scandal, a vast diversion of Israel's U.S. military aid which last summer seemed to have been brought under control, has reared up again. Now a second major U.S. military contractor, Pratt and Whitney, has acknowledged participating in fraudulent contracting schemes like those to which the General Electric Corporation (GE) was a major player in the Dotan scandal. It kept paying Mr. Dotan until 1992. Mr. Dingell noted in opening remarks at the subcommittee hearings.

Between the mid-1980s and 1990, Pratt and Whitney participated in kickbacks and contract over-pricing involving over \$12m of Israel's U.S. aid, according to Mr. Stiner. In one scheme, Pratt and Whitney paid almost \$6.5m to two companies linked to Mr. Dotan, although the firms, Yretco and Air Tech, had only one employee between them and performed less than \$600,000 worth of work filling orders for computer software.

An intelligence link

Benjamin Sonneschein, who worked for Yretco and Air Tech, carried some of the intelligence in cash to Europe, where

officials interrogate Mr. Katz. Mr. Katz's prominence in two major scandals apparently did not faze Pratt and Whitney, which retained him as a consultant throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, paying him a total of about \$250,000, according to Mr. Dingell. "Even after Pratt and Whitney knew that Mr. Katz was a major player in the Dotan scandal, it kept paying Mr. Dotan until 1992. Mr. Dingell noted in opening remarks at the subcommittee hearings.

It was deposited in accounts controlled by Mr. Katz. Mr. Stiner testified last month. A GAO report submitted to Mr. Dingell quotes internal Pratt and Whitney correspondence saying that the company had "specific direction from (the Israeli air force) to make no mention of Israeli air force Yretco connections... for security reasons."

The GAO also reported that Pratt and Whitney was instrumental in getting a job at Bet Shemesh Engines, an Israeli company 40 per cent owned by Pratt and Whitney.

During the G.E. investigation Rep. Dingell voiced suspicion that the embedded funds were being used to finance Israeli intelligence operations, a contention his staff repeated in interviews with Middle East International (MEI). Although Israel portrayed Mr. Dotan as a corrupt rogue who used his position to extort bribes, an internal memo leaked during the Bush administration contended that official Israeli involvement could not be ruled out.

Testifying at the hearings, Robert F. Daniel, the chairman of Pratt and Whitney's parent company, United Technologies Corporation, said that employees had not knowingly violated U.S. regulations. But a U.S. Justice Department official told the Associated Press anonymously that Pratt and Whitney was now under

investigation. However, the official said, the department has had difficulty speaking to Israeli officials.

Israel stonewalls

That is an understatement. Even though the grant for its \$1.8 bn in annual U.S. military aid commits it to cooperating in investigations of fraud, Israel balked then negotiated for months before it agreed last June to allow U.S. officials to interview Mr. Dotan, Mr. Katz and Mr. Ingber — through Israeli government minders. But, according to Rep. Dingell, when Justice Department investigators arrived in Israel, "they were unable to interview them". At the time, justice officials refused Middle East International's request to provide information about how the investigators fared in the GAO.

As a result of Israel's failure to cooperate, Mr. Dingell said, this year's grant agreement has not been signed. The 1992 grant was signed later, in October of that year, after Israel promised to "cooperate" with the corruption probe.

Also discussed at October's hearings was the Pentagon's plan to abolish the practice of

allowing military aid recipients to buy U.S.-funded weapon systems direct from U.S. manufacturers. Announced last June, the plan would have required all the aid to be spent through the Defence Department's Foreign Military Sales programme starting on Jan. 1. It was not just the Mr. Dotan scandal that prompted the switch. Pentagon audits turned up irregularities in procurements by several nations, among them Egypt. But the new rules would have fallen most heavily on Israel, which does most of its arms buying through its purchasing mission in New York, an office with a history of embroilment in illegal arms export scandals.

"The new rules would have fallen most heavily on Israel, which does most of its arms buying through its purchasing mission in New York, an office with a history of embroilment in illegal arms export scandals... The deputy director of the Pentagon's foreign aid office, told the subcommittee that the defence department had 'extended' the current programme until July 1, 1994. By then the purchasing mission might be hard at work procuring the new weapons President Clinton promised Yitzhak Rabin."

"Israel complained vociferously and the Senate blocked the (Pentagon's) action," recounted Rep. Dingell. Glenn A. Rudd, the deputy director of the Pentagon's foreign aid office, told the subcommittee that the Defence Department had "extended" the current programme until July 1, 1994, while it "consults" with aid recipients, Congress and other government agencies. By then the purchasing mission might be hard at work procuring the new weapons President Clinton promised Yitzhak Rabin at the beginning of November — Middle East International.



Is there more to John Major than homely greyness, Britons wonder?

By Peter Bale
Reuter

LONDON — Three years after replacing the towering figure of Margaret Thatcher as prime minister, John Major remains an enigma to colleagues and Britain's voters.

Ask what he stands for and few have a ready answer.

His prime characteristic is a homely greyness. A colleague once described him as "melting into the foreground".

Like the man, his policies have yet to make a deep impression on a British psyche on which "Thatcherism" — her brand of grocery-store economics and self-reliance — left an indelible imprint over 11 years of her rule.

"Majorism" has yet to emerge despite a few false starts.

"I will put it in a single phrase: the power to choose — and the right to own," he said of his beliefs three years ago.

His call for a "back to basics" return to individual responsibility and fundamental values has struck few chords and sits oddly with the prescription he offered when he took over on Nov. 28, 1990, promising "a nation at ease with itself".

On a one-to-one basis 50-year-old Major impresses with a direct gaze, patent honesty and an engaging manner. One biographer

said she found the former finance minister sexy.

In public, however, Mr. Major can come across as a real-life version of Chance the gardener played by Peter Sellers in the film "Being There", a simple man with a fondness for truisms who is catapulted into national politics.

"As we dine in white tie off gold plate other Londoners do not," Major told a gala dinner of London financiers this month.

But friends say there is more to Mr. Major than meets the eye.

"You don't get to be prime minister of this country by being a cardboard cut-out. You don't win an election if you are a cardboard cut-out. You don't continue in office if you are a cardboard cut-out," said one who has stood by Mr. Major during a dreadful 18 months since the April 1992 election.

Friends say his nadir was a trip to Tokyo in September in which he was reported as referring to cabinet colleagues as "bastards" and to opponents on his back benches as "barney".

But Mr. Major turned the tide, they add, with a rousing speech to the conservatives' annual conference in Blackpool in October. The party finally realised it needed him, they say.

"The longer he stays the more he will get a reputation as a survivor," said one party adviser.

His fortunes could

change dramatically if he succeeds in his efforts to bring peace to Northern Ireland, in the way Thatcher won a huge popularity boost from the 1982 war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands.

—Major remains the only man who can unify the right and left wings of the conservatives, his allies say. They see him riding economic recovery to another election victory in 1996 or 1997.

Allies deny Mr. Major has no ideas of his own. His beliefs are firmly rooted, they say, in the lessons of his working class background as the son of a former Vaudeville performer who fell on hard times after his garden-gnome business collapsed.

"He is a conservative," said one. "He is not someone who needs to go around inventing ideology."

Being a conservative has not been enough to win Mr. Major the admiration or even the acquiescence of his predecessor.

Mr. Thatcher's memoirs suggest she considered him weak intellectually and somehow second-rate. Recalling how she offered him the job of finance minister only three months after being appointed foreign secretary, she wrote: "I told him that we all have to accept second best occasionally. That applied to me just as much as to him."

LETTERS

Traffic problems

To the Editor:

As an expatriate, I wish to write about my experience in Jordan. I thought I would start with something very visible in the streets of Amman.

First of all, I must say that Amman is one of the cleanest cities I have ever visited or lived in. Clean means loving to drive around and enjoying the beautiful landscape of this mountainous city, even when you are driving to work early in the morning. Nice, isn't it?

Well, this is when the adventure begins. And maybe my message will get somewhere and reach someone's attention.

Three groups in Amman must be watched carefully and hence, some disciplinary action must be taken against them.

1. White cabs (taxis): They drive around as if they own the streets of Amman. They stop wherever and whenever they wish, risking many accidents. Most of the time we, the public, are at fault because accidents normally involve hitting the car from the rear end. In this case we are automatically at fault.

2. White cabs (service cars): Who decided on their pick up stops? Beats me! But how do you justify these cars blocking the way by just parking there, waiting for their passengers, even in the main streets. We appreciate the fact that these cars are part of the backbone of this country's transportation system, but I am sure there can be found better stops for them instead of the middle of the street. It is a nightmare I go through (and I believe others like me) every morning before I reach my office.

3. Traffic police: Although they do their best to organise traffic every morning, their best isn't enough. Why don't they take a closer look at how flagrantly traffic laws are being violated every minute. For instance, many drivers in Amman Watch intersections with stop signs carefully and you will know what I am talking about. Crossing a stop sign is like jumping into a death trap. Any car has a decent chance of

problem. The authorities must review the performance of their traffic police in order to take tougher measures against those who made a habit of breaking the law and getting away with it.

Instead of issuing citations for broken signal lights or disfunctional head beams, I recommend concentrating on more crucial matters.

Al Ghazarian,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Features

Egypt cautious on Iran's call for dialogue

CAIRO (R) — Egypt reacted cautiously Tuesday to a call by Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani for the two countries, once close friends but fierce rivals for more than a decade, to open a dialogue and improve relations.

Although the two regional powers remain at odds, with Iran's brand of Islamic fundamentalism pitted against Egypt's Western-oriented foreign policy, Mr. Rafsanjani's call could signal a temporary truce in a war over the airwaves.

Mr. Rafsanjani was speaking in an interview with prominent Egyptian journalist Mohammad Heikal, broadcast on Lebanese television Sunday. "I think Iran and Egypt should have a dialogue. Of course there are also opposing views in Iran. But I continue to believe that we should have a dialogue with Egypt in the hope that we might be able to correct the future course," Mr. Rafsanjani said.

Egyptian presidential spokesman Mohammad Abdul Moneim, commenting on the interview, said: "There are official channels for these things. We do not discuss these things in the media."

"It is the same as it has been for years, nothing has changed," he told Reuters Tuesday.

For several months the usual media war between Cairo and Tehran has much abated.

Earlier this year, Egypt and Iran were attacking each other almost daily with vitriol that often targeted their leaders personally. Egypt accused Iran of encouraging Muslim militant violence in Egypt and the Arab World, and Iran accused Egypt of treachery to the Muslim cause and subservience to Washington.

But in recent months, Iranian criticism of a wave of executions of Egyptian militants has been conspicuous by its absence. The Tehran's media have turned their attention from militant struggle in countries like Egypt and Algeria to opposing the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace agreement.

Egypt in turn has concentrated on the militant connection with Pakistan and Afghanistan, dropping Iran and Sudan from the list of named culprits.

President Hosni Mubarak explained in Cairo newspapers on Tuesday that militants planning operations like last week's attempt to assassinate Prime Minister Atef Sedki came from Afghanistan via Yemen, bringing money with them from abroad.

In the time of the late Shah of Iran in the 1970s, Egypt and Iran were close allies, bound by a pro-Western view of the Middle East and a personal bond between the Shah and late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

But the Islamic revolution in 1979 changed all that.

The Iranian mullahs and the secular Egyptian leaders who made peace with Israel could not have been further apart.

The gulf widened when Egypt took in the ousted Shah and refused to hand him over to Iranian revolutionary leaders.

The Shah now lies buried in a 19th century Cairo mosque alongside members of Egypt's own former royal family.

Egypt backed Iraq against Iran during the 1980-88 Gulf war, Iraq used Egyptian-made munitions and employed two million Egyptian workers while Cairo did its best to keep Iran's Islamic revolution hermetically sealed.

The two sides still jockey for position in the Gulf states, which both consider part of their spheres of influence.

But they reestablished low-level diplomatic missions this year and Iran pumps over half a million barrels of oil per day across Egypt through the Suez pipeline.

Security Council

(Continued from page 1)

The United Nations would let the proceeds be used to buy food, medicine and supplies for essential civilian needs, subject to U.N. monitoring of sales and the equitable distribution of humanitarian supplies, including to rebel areas. "Iran authorities bear full responsibility for any suffering in Iraq," Mr. Clinton said.

German priests lose touch with their shrinking flocks

By Michael Christie
Reuter

COLOGNE, Germany — It took 600 years to build Cologne's magnificent Gothic cathedral.

But at the current rate at which the faithful are defecting, every pew in the surrounding Catholic diocese could be empty in a century.

Germany's main churches, Catholic and Protestant, saw record numbers of people turning their backs on them last year — 190,000 Catholics and about 240,000 Protestants.

"This is not just a church crisis. This is a religious crisis," warned Bishop Karl Lehmann, head of the Catholic Bishops' Conference at their recent congress in Fulda.

Unlike in other countries, where falling church attendance may be the only guide to a congregation's strength, German bishops know how many are leaving because their churches are funded through a special tax levied on all believers.

To get rid of paying the tax, Germans must formally renounce their membership and get a certificate from their church to present to the tax authorities.

With the economy stuck in neutral and wages eroded by four per cent annual inflation, many churchgoers are thinking twice about paying the hefty 10 per cent the levy adds to tax bills.

Last year, Cologne, Europe's wealthiest Catholic diocese and the worst-hit in Germany, saw its congregation shrink by 24,000, or just over one per cent.

The diocese takes in most of Germany's industrial heartland and is particularly vulnerable to economic chills, said Father Heiner Koch, head of its counselling service.

He blamed many defections on a temporary 7.5 per cent solidarity tax introduced by Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government in 1991 to help pay for the soaring costs of German unification.

A recent study commis-

sioned by the Bishops' Conference found most Catholic defectors were deeply unhappy with the tenets and behaviour of the church.

"Church tax is certainly one of the main reasons why people are leaving the church," said Father Wilhelm Passavanti, a priest at Bunn's Catholic Cathedral.

"But if you look deeper, it becomes obvious that many people can simply no longer come to terms with God."

The study by the Allensbach Institute found that 83 per cent of those who left the church disagreed with the Pope's ban on contraception and 63 per cent disliked his stand on divorce. More than half said there were too many hypocrites in the church.

In many cases, church tax was simply the straw that broke the camel's back. Only 20 per cent knew how much they paid.

"Whatever church tax was given as a reason for leaving the congregation, it was rarely in isolation and more often accompanied by harsh criticism of the church," wrote the institute's Renate Krecher in the *Rheinischer Merkur* newspaper.

"It is not just the money — I can afford that and after all, we really do live in the lap of luxury," said one of the people polled by the institute.

"The question for me is, do I really want to support this institution with my money and when I see this pomp and show, I become more and more convinced that I don't."

Protestants always had fewer scruples about quitting than Catholics, who usually have closer ties to their church, said Father Peter Kollmar of the German Protestant Church.

"But both churches are obviously suffering from the increasing secularisation of society," he added.

More worrying for church leaders, the Allensbach study found the pews packed with doubters thinking about or even preparing to leave — at least 23 per cent of Catholics

were considering the move, 31 per cent of Protestants.

"Whereas previous periods of church defections have been followed by a few years of consolidation, there seems no end in sight to the current wave," the institute said.

Breaking the wave will be no easy task, said Father Passavanti. "We only find out that people are thinking about leaving after they've left," he complained. "I don't know why people seem to find it difficult to talk to us."

Andreas Feige, one of Germany's leading experts in the sociology of religion, said the issue was not loss of faith, but the decreasing importance of institutions in a society which promotes individualism.

"It is not astonishing that more and more people are leaving. It is astonishing that so many remain members," said Mr. Feige, a professor at the Technical University of Braunschweig.

Mr. Feige's argument finds an echo even among the faithful.

"I would never leave the church because my faith is so firmly anchored," said teacher Helena Hammelrath, a Catholic mother of four. But she can understand why some do.

"If you look closely at the church, you see it's an organisation just like a state or a political party with people who want power and who will do anything to cling to it ... The church has in reality little to do with absolutes."

Bishop Lehmann argues that the church must change radically if it is to survive and spread the Christian message.

That does not, however, mean changing the theological fundamentals. "If you plant a seed, you can't fumble around with it constantly, digging it up, moving it around. You have to wait for it to grow," said Father Passavanti.

Mr. Koch agreed: "Sure, we have to ask ourselves where we can adapt to modern society, but there will always be some aspects we will not want to adapt to," he said.

Autonomy talks make progress on detainees

(Continued from page 1)

Yunis. Another photographer was roughed up by soldiers and detained briefly.

Israel, PLO

(Continued from page 1)

Patrick Baz, chief photographer of Agence France Presse, was pushed and roughed up by soldiers at Jabalya refugee camp.

"Journalists in Gaza today were not caught in crossfire covering the events but became clear targets of Israeli soldiers," the foreign press association in Israel wrote in a press release issued Tuesday.

Some of the heaviest clashes broke out at Khan Yunis where Ahmad Abu Rish, a Fatah Hawk, was gunned down on Sunday a week after he was arrested by Israel.

His death, the 26th Palestinian killed by Israeli bullets since the autonomy accord, led the Hawks to resume the armed struggle in defiance of Mr. Arafat's ceasefire orders and sparked the fresh violence.

Mr. Abu Zayd denied any split between Fatah's political and military wings saying if a new ceasefire order came from PLO headquarters in Tunis it would be obeyed.

Colonel S., a deputy commander in Gaza Strip, also called for calm and admitted for the first time the army did not intend to kill Abu Rish.

"We want to tell Fatah and the population that we have not declared war on them. We are only fighting terrorists who want to sabotage the peace process.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

The Evangelical Lutheran Church and The Scandinavian Ladies of Amman, Will have a Christmas Bazaar on Friday, Dec. 3, 1993, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Church Hall of the Evangelical Lutheran Good Shepherd's Church in Um Issumak opposite the Municipality Building.

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Six countries to get global warming data stations

By Wendy Lubetkin

GENEVA — The establishment

of six new stations to collect data on global warming and ozone depletion should help scientists fill in major gaps in their understanding of how the world's climate system works.

The United States and other developed countries have agreed to provide experts to assist in setting up the stations, which will be funded by a \$4.8-million grant from the Global Environment Facility and managed by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), the UN agency specialising in earth's atmosphere and climate, according to a WMO press release.

Located in isolated areas of Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia, Kenya and China, each Global Atmosphere Watch (GAW) station will carry out a wide range of measurements of concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The new stations will function as part of a worldwide network of WMO stations monitoring the changing composition of the atmosphere and acquiring baseline data related to global warming

and ozone depletion.

Their contribution should double the amount of data available from remote areas of the atmosphere, according to Bernard G. Mendonca, a scientist with the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), who is working with WMO to establish the new baseline stations.

Setting up the new stations, the WMO press release points out, has taken on added significance given the record low ozone levels recorded over Antarctica in October. One of the stations, to be located at Ushuaia in the southern tip of Argentina, will be positioned under the outer edge of the present ozone hole, Mr. Mendonca explained in an interview.

Because the stations will collect "baseline" data, each will be located in a remote area removed from local impacts of industry and human activity. In the past there has been a dearth of such information from the developing world.

"The sites have been chosen to give insightful information to help us determine where the major sources of pollutants and naturally occurring green-

house gases are," Mr. Mendonca said, adding that the host countries will be responsible for providing the buildings, utilities, personnel and operating costs to ensure that the data collection continues in the years to come. Developed countries — including the United States, Canada, Spain, France and Germany — have agreed to provide experts to assist in setting up the stations.

Mr. Mendonca pointed out that each of the GAW stations will be located in a region from which no baseline information is currently available. The new data, he said, will contribute significantly to scientific understanding of the troposphere — the layer of atmosphere that extends outward 8 to 11 kilometres from earth's surface.

"When a carbon monoxide

or methane molecule enters the atmosphere it enters the troposphere, where these molecules undergo chemical transformations," he explained. "In vast areas of the world we don't understand this chemistry and hopefully these stations will give us a better idea of how it works far from the areas where pollutants enter the atmosphere."

The project will provide sophisticated measuring equipment to the host countries, and train those who are to operate

it, the WMO said. The host countries will be responsible for providing the buildings, utilities, personnel and operating costs to ensure that the data collection continues in the years to come. Developed countries — including the United States, Canada, Spain, France and Germany — have agreed to provide experts to assist in setting up the stations.

Mr. Mendonca, who is director of observatory operations at NOAA's Climate Monitoring and Diagnostics Laboratory in Boulder, Colorado, noted that his laboratory is already hosting a Chinese scientist.

The visiting scientist is designing, building and calibrating a CO₂ measuring system

that will go into operation at China's new mountaintop station next year.

Once in operation, that station will share information on CO₂ with others in the GAW global network.

The expansion of the GAW

network, Mr. Mendonca said, will help scientists gain a "global perspective" on climate data — United States Information Agency.

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World Bank backs private lending efforts to world's poorest

WASHINGTON (AP) — The world's biggest lender, the World Bank, wants to help some of the world's poorest people borrow as little as \$50 — enough to buy a cow, some chickens and stave off hunger.

The idea is to use money that can't help "the rest of the poor." Such savers are seen as more willing to pay back the cash than the governments that often provide U.S. loans.

For people in Africa, South Asia and elsewhere won't be seen at World Bank offices to seek loans. But the bank is producing a \$2 million donation programme sponsored by the Grameen Bank of

Bangladesh that it hopes will spread throughout the developing world.

It is the first time the bank has contributed to such private lending efforts and its tacit recognition that some of its lending programmes have failed to help the world's poorest people.

The announcement was made by bank President Lewis Preston at a conference on world hunger that opened Tuesday.

"Hunger and malnutrition are the most devastating problems facing the world's poor," Mr. Preston said before the conference.

The bank is determined to work forcefully with others to

help these people."

He said bad government policies, rather than war, civil unrest or drought are the main causes of world hunger.

The World Bank's charter allows it to lend only to governments, but bank officials say they are exploring new ways to aid small-scale lending programmes, including direct donations to non-government entities.

The bank's support for small loans to individuals is part of a new effort to cut world hunger in half — a goal bank officials now believe can be achieved in a generation. Currently, about 30 per cent of the world's people are poor and hungry.

The goal is to cut that to 15 per cent by 2015.

The bank hopes to attract other big-money donors to lending programmes sponsored by such private entities as the Grameen Bank and the Badan Kredit Kecamatan of Indonesia. It's also courting international groups, such as the United Nations' International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the Freedom from Hunger Cam-

For the year that began in June, the bank will lend \$4.5 billion for policy reform, \$1.6 billion for education and \$1.5 billion for population, health and nutrition.

The principle of the grassroots loans is simple: Instead of giving a food package, the programmes lend a starving family enough money for a cow, chickens or a bolt of cloth to produce income for food.

It's a principle that already has worked successfully in several countries, with up to 97 per cent of borrowers paying back their loans. Mr. Serageldin said in an interview. "I would like to see us become the new abolitionists."

Mr. Serageldin said, "Just as in the last century people said that slavery was unconscionable, I think in the world of plenty that we live in today, we should all be striving to remove that degradation to human dignity, the silent hunger that is everywhere in the world."

The bank's new effort was endorsed by Fawzi Al Sultan, IFAD president who is participating in the conference.

"The poor are bankable. With \$50 to \$100, you can triple a family's income, and that increases the family's nutritional intake," Mr. Al Sultan said. "It changes the social structure."

Japan's unemployment rate climbs to 2.7%

TOKYO (AFP) — In another sign of Japan's worsening economic slump, the government on Tuesday that the unemployment rate rose again to hit 2.7 per cent in October, the first point for nearly six months, while the job market continued to shrink.

The seasonally-adjusted job-

rate rose by 0.1 of a per-

centage point from the figure a

month earlier, following a 0.1-

per cent rise in September, after

1.2 and 2.2 per cent for four

months. The Management and

Coordination Agency said.

It was the highest level since

1983, while the job rate

though it was still lower than

unemployment rates in other

industrialised countries,

agency said.

In a separate report released

by the Japanese

ministry, the ratio of

job seekers to job seek-

ers for the ninth consecutive

month to 6.7, or 67 open-

ings for every 100 job seekers,

down from 6.9 in September.

The figure was the lowest

since June 1987, when the ratio

fell to 6.6, following a rapid

recession of one year.

Concerns about further de-

terioration of the labour situa-

tion, cabinet ministers held a

special meeting Tuesday where

they examined ways to main-

tain employment.

Labour Minister Chikara

Kumagai told the meeting

strategies for putting

measures, such as

their support for corpora-

tions to maintain jobs and for

the creation of more

employment at regional level.

Finally, the

ministers

agreed to

find that Jap-

anese companies

are increasingly pessimistic

about the prospect for recov-

ery and that more of them

were burdened by redundant workers.

The survey was conducted at

China set to become major new market for Arab oil

ABU DHABI (AFP) — China is expected to become a net oil importer in the next few years and Arab states will be the main beneficiaries, an official Arab report has said.

China's demand for oil would rise to three million barrels per day (b/d) by 1995 and around 3.7 million b/d by 2000 due to rapid economic growth, said the report published by the Cairo-based Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC).

Arab countries in the Middle East would be "the main source of crude supplies for China," it said.

China currently produces around 2.8 million b/d, and its

output is projected to reach three million b/d by 1995 and 3.1 million b/d by 2000.

China, with estimated crude reserves of 24 billion barrels, already plans to import 60,000 b/d from Saudi Arabia under an agreement signed in July during a visit to Riyadh by Chinese Vice Premier Li Lanqing.

Around 20,000 b/d will also be supplied by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), already a major fertilizer exporter (OAPEC).

Arabs states produce more than 16 million b/d of oil but some of them, mainly in the Gulf, have embarked on major projects to expand output capacity to meet a projected

increase in world demand.

Around 2.8 million b/d of Arab crude are exported to Japan, four million b/d to the European Community, two million b/d to the United States and the rest to other countries, mainly in Asia.

Gulf Arab states alone produce around 13 million b/d.

According to the 10-nation OAPEC, Arab proven crude reserves stood at 628.4 billion barrels at the end of 1992, accounting for 61.8 per cent of the total world oil reserves of 1,016 billion barrels.

Since 1991 Qatar's reserves have fallen to 3.73 billion barrels from 4.5 billion, and Kuwait's to 9.65 billion barrels from 9.7 billion.

French jobless rate hits 12%

PARIS (AFP) — French un-

employment rate rose by 1.2 per cent in October to total of 3,282,500 at the end of the month, according to seasonally adjusted figures released Tues-

day by the French labour ministry.

The unemployment rate rose to 12 per cent of the work-force, the ministry said.

In terms of figures not cor-

rected for seasonal variations,

unemployment hit 3,368,500 at

Tuesday that the mea-

planned by the government to combat joblessness will have no impact in the immediate future, and "will not prevent another marked increase in unemployment in 1994."

It said that economic "growth of less than one per cent in 1994" (in real terms) would make it necessary to seek additional solutions to the employment problem, "focusing on cost of labour and work-sharing."

GCC states — Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE — make up the largest consumer market in the region, with imports of more than \$50 billion a year, nearly half the total Arab imports.

the end of October, up 11.9

per cent in a year and 2.1 per cent in a month.

The ministry said there had been another rise in the number of long-term unemployed (more than a year), to 1,055,000 at the end of October, up 3.2 per cent in a month.

In another development,

Societe Generale Bank's eco-

nomic reports department said

that the end of October, up 11.9

per cent in a year and 2.1 per cent in a month.

Antara quoted Jobannes

Sumarlin, former fi-

reminister and head of I

SLI's economists association, as

saying the government had to

avoid financing projects that

were feasible only if they

needed privileges like protec-

tions and subsidies.

His remarks appeared to be

a swipe at Research and Tech-

nology Minister Jusuf Habibie,

whose preoccupation with

high-tech aviation and shipping

projects have drawn criticism

at home and abroad.

Mr. Sumarit, also a former

minister, told the

meeting around 30 per cent of

state funds were missing. It

was not possible to contact him

to confirm the figure.

He said the

were due to in-

cluded siphoning off of funds

while they were being dis-

bursed, waste and

particularly corruption.

Antara quoted Sumarit as

saying that the government

had to make a good start allowing you to view your congenital associates from a new stance, reconsidering their various talents and aptitudes.

ANTARES: (March 21 to April 19)

Get out in the world of activi-

ty and try and find out just

how you can best advance your

credit and career conditions so

your prestige soars.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20)

Now you need to wide awake to

find new ways to implement the

vocational activities in which

you get involved in your

secure structure.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21)

Look for better ways to handle

your business if

you want to get more

out of it by adding to your

present abundance and to work

in a system to intend to

achieve your goals.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22)

Take a good look around

your home now for you can see

things to be done that usually

escape your attention and you

can easily towards correcting

them.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21)

U.S. consumer confidence rises sharply

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. consumer confidence rose sharply in November, reflecting greater optimism about the job market and the economy in general, a widely followed survey reported Tuesday.

The Conference Board, a New York research group which tracks sentiment through a monthly poll, said its consumer confidence index

registered an unexpectedly strong gain of 11 points to 71.2, up from a revised 60.5 reading in October. Some economists were expecting a one point gain.

Such a rise in the survey of consumer sentiment "has occurred only rarely in the 25-year history of this survey programme," the Conference Board said.

The index, calculated on a 1985 base of 100, is derived from consumer responses to questions that range from home-buying plans to local job conditions. It is considered a useful barometer for gauging the economic outlook.

"... The impressive magnitude of the November gain strongly suggests that better times may well be one the way," said Fabian Linden, executive director of the Conference Board Consumer Research centre, which conducts the poll of 5,000 U.S. households.

The optimistic reading was spread across all regions of the country.

The report was especially surprising considering the consumer sentiment was markedly pessimistic in October, when the index lost 3.3 points, according to revised figures.

The November survey showed a sharp decline in the number of people who described the business conditions as "bad," the survey said. The proportion of people who hold this negative view is at the lowest level in about three years.

In addition, the report showed an increasing number of consumers who believe that jobs are plentiful, the survey said. Pessimists still outnumber the optimists on both of these questions, but by a narrowing margin.

For the next six months, "more respondents than previously now expect business conditions to improve, fewer than previously fear they will worsen," the survey said.

Mr. Linden cautioned the survey, while showing a sharp improvement, still shows the economy isn't taking flight.

"While the measure of consumer confidence chalked up an impressive gain in November, the present index reading is still at a level generally associated with a lackluster economy," Mr. Linden said.

The Conference Board survey is watched as an indicator of consumer buying patterns, and in turn, the health of the economy. Since consumer spending accounts for two-thirds of the nation's economic activity, growth depends on consumer willingness to borrow and spend.

Some of the nation's top business forecasters said earlier that the U.S. economy will grow next year at a modest pace that will leave unemployment stuck just about where it is now.

The National Association of Business Economists (NABE) said investment spending by businesses and housing construction should be the shining stars of a generally lackluster economy next year.

"While the immediate prognosis for the economy is favourable, we remain concerned about the underlying strength of the recovery," said William Dunkelberg, NABE president and dean of the business school at Temple University.

The group's panel of 43 forecasters said they expected the economy to exhibit the same stop-and-go pattern it has de-

mstrated since the recession ended in March 1991 — with the economy surging forward for a quarter or two, only to be slowed by various forces.

It blamed the protracted period of lethargic growth on a variety of forces, from cutbacks in the defence industry and weakness in non-residential construction to continued layoffs by some of America's largest corporations.

The slow growth will help keep inflation well under control and for that reason, NABE said it expects interest rates to stay low.

NABE made the following predictions.

Economic growth: The overall economy, as measured by the gross domestic product (GDP) will expand by 2.8 per cent in 1994, the same growth rate that the group is forecasting for this year. For 1992, the GDP grew by 2.6 per cent after having fallen by 0.7 per cent in the recession year of 1991. For the current October-December period, the group predicted a significant pickup, in growth to above per cent, reflecting a rebound from last summer's floods and higher auto production.

Unemployment: The unemployment rate will average 6.5 per cent next year, only slightly improved from the current 6.8 per cent.

Inflation: Consumer prices should post modest gains of 2.9 per cent for this year and 3.3 per cent for 1994 as the weak economy helps to keep a lid of wage and price pressures. Prices were up 3.1 per cent in 1992.

Kuwait to set up free trade zone

KUWAIT (R) — The Kuwaiti cabinet said it had decided Monday to establish a free trade zone to stimulate trade and give the non-oil economy a boost.

"The decision has been taken and I think there is no going back despite our demands to postpone it," Mansur Al Zawani, banking chief at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told AFP Tuesday, contacted by telephone.

"Such a measure comes with the framework of procedures aimed at stimulating the movement of trade and pushing forward the country's economic cycle," minister for cabinet affairs Abdul Aziz Al Dakhl said after a cabinet meeting.

"The cabinet approved establishing a free-trade zone in the State of Kuwait and assigned the relevant authorities to take the necessary steps for execution," a statement said.

Kuwaiti economists say they hope such a zone would help diversify the economy away from dependence on oil, which accounts for more than 90 per cent of government revenue.

The cabinet did not say where the zone would be.

The trade and industry ministry said last month it wanted to set up the zone in Kuwait City's Shweikh harbour, the main non-oil merchandise sea port.

The ministry plans a wide-ranging liberalisation of the economy to encourage private investment in the state-owned oil sector and widen the scope for foreign investment in industry.

Oman presses ahead with income tax

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Oman is pressing ahead with the introduction of income taxes on local firms to offset a decline in oil earnings despite objections from the private sector.

"The decision has been taken and I think there is no going back despite our demands to postpone it," Mansur Al Zawani, banking chief at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told AFP Tuesday, contacted by telephone.

It said the taxes would not raise a large sum. "But in case the government insists on going ahead with the taxes, we expect it will increase the exemption limit to more than 30,000 riyals," it said.

The tax is part of large-scale reforms to activate the economy and reduce reliance on unstable oil export earnings. They include privatisation and incentives to local and foreign investors.

Oman produces 800,000 barrels of oil per day but like other Gulf states it has suffered from a persistent budget deficit because of weak crude prices and failure to make substantial spending cuts.

The shortfall stood at \$790 million in 1992 and was projected at \$1.14 billion in 1993.

During the 1991-1995 development plan, the deficit is expected to reach \$2.28 billion, after expenditure was revised up to \$26.7 billion from \$24.5 billion.

More than 100 foreign and joint ventures operate in Oman and taxes on them fetched nearly 25 million riyals (\$65 million) in the first nine months of 1993, according to official Omani figures.

AMERICAN FINANCIAL MARKET		
NEW YORK BANK CENTER AND JORDANIAN - SWEDEBANK		
UNPUBLISHED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 10/11/1993		
COMPANY & NAME	TRADED VOLUME	CLOSING PRICE - 10/11/93
JD	JP	PRICE
ABAD BANK	25,300	176,500 115,500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	1,172,000	5,800 5,860
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL BANK	3,922	1,750 1,770
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	7,432	3,250 3,280
THE INVESTING BANK	25,571	2,950 2,930
JORDAN CABLE BANK	25,800	2,850 2,830
JORDAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	18,800	4,000 4,000
JORDAN EAGLE BANKING INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	4,202	4,200 4,200
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	14,203	1,680 1,700
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	5,078	4,200 4,150
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	10,865	3,290 3,250
JORDAN TOURISM & SPA COMPLEX	27,000	4,500 4,500
JORDANIAN PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	4,143	4,500 4,550
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	1,281	0,990 0,990
THE JORDANIAN FINANCIAL INVESTMENT	3,118	1,380 1,610
JORDANIAN INDUSTRIES	12,700	2,700 2,700
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	27,205	8,000 8,000
JORDAN PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRIES	17,400	2,800 2,800
JORDANIA BANK	2,320	3,800 3,800
JORDANIAN FINANCIAL INVESTMENT & INVESTMENT	13,795	14,400 14,100
JORDAN ALUMINUM INDUSTRIES	22,973	2,840 2,850
JORDAN CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	7,140	1,090 1,090
JORDAN CEMENT COMPANY	5,952	7,950 7,950
JORDAN CLOTHING INDUSTRIES	21,432	3,030 3,040
JORDAN KERAMIC CO. FOR AGRO & FOOD PROD.	50,758	4,850 4,850
JORDAN MODERN INDUSTRIES		
GRAND TOTAL	1,630,788	
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	103,000	
TRADED VOLUME IN THE PARALLEL MARKET / JD	164,034	

Financial Jordan Times
in co-operation with
Markets Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close		Tokyo Close	
	Date: 29/11/1993	Date: 30/11/1993	Date: 29/11/1993	Date: 30/11/1993
Sterling Pound	1.4895	1.4895		
Deutsche Mark	1.7085	1.7075		
Swiss Franc	1.4905	1.4905		
French Franc	5.9010	5.9070 **		
Japanese Yen	109.80	108.82		
European Currency Unit	1.1250	1.1240 **		

International Exchange Rates Date: 30/11/1993

Currency	Bid		Offer		
	USD/Or	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Or	JD/Gm
Sterling	570.90	7.20	Silver	4.45	0.100
24 Karat					

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 30/11/1993

Currency	Bid		Offer	
	JD	Or	JD	Or
U.S. Dollar	0.7010	0.7030		
Sterling Pound	1.0431	1.0453		
Deutsche Mark	0.4101	0.4122		
Swiss Franc	0.3699	0.4722		
French Franc	0.1186	0.1192		
Japanese Yen	0.6456	0.6468		
Dutch Guilder	0.3654	0.3672		
Swedish Krona	0.0000	0.0000		
Italian Lira	0.0415	0.0415		
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000		

Other Currencies Date: 30/11/1993

Currency	Bid		Offer	
	JD	Or	JD	Or
Bahraini Dinar	1.8360	1.8630		
Lebanese Lira	0.040255	0.041445		
Saudi Riyal	0.1816	0.1882		
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2200	2.5100		
Qatari Riyal	0.1695	0.1		

CSCE opens meeting with call for protection of minorities

ROME (Agencies) — Foreign ministers from 52 countries opened a two-day conference on European Security Tuesday and heard strong calls for stepped-up efforts to protect national minorities.

The minorities question, which has troubled the continent since the cold war ended, was expected to figure prominently at the ministerial session of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Italian Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi urged the CSCE to strengthen its capacity to deal with the issue as part of its campaign of preventive diplomacy to head off conflicts.

"The protection of minorities constitutes a priority obligation in the double sense of ensuring stability and respect for human rights," said Mr. Ciampi, whose country assumed the CSCE presidency for a year.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher warned against "aggressive and often myopic nationalism" that has fuelled conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere.

"On both sides of the Atlantic we share a strong interest in building respect for diversity, in enfranchising minorities, in offering every person a stake and a say in national life," he said.

Gore to spread wings on world stage

WASHINGTON (R) — Vice President Al Gore, who has emerged as Bill Clinton's top troubleshooter, is about to spread his wings on the world stage in an effort to polish the administration's diplomatic image.

Mr. Gore departs Tuesday for Mexico to talk with President Carlos Salinas De Gortari and the following week embarks on a mission to Moscow that closely follows Russian parliamentary elections called by President Boris Yeltsin in a bid to keep reform efforts alive.

Mr. Gore and White House Chief of Staff Thomas McLarry go to Mexico City for talks on implementing the North American Free Trade Agreement, which creates a free-trade zone among the United States, Mexico and Canada beginning Jan. 1.

Before leaving for Mexico, Mr. Gore will join Mr. Clinton for talks at the White House with the leaders of El Salvador, Panama, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Belize.

The flurry of vice presidential activity reflects a change in style more than in substance. He has been involved in the decision-making process since taking office in January, but now he will be talking about it more.

U.S. to keep aid ban on Pakistan

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States Monday insisted it intends to continue a ban on military aid to Pakistan despite a new proposal that would radically revamp American foreign assistance to reflect post-cold war realities.

Last week, State Department spokesman Mike McCurry told reporters the Clinton administration wanted to lift restrictions on aid pegged to Pakistan's nuclear programme because "extension of the... sanctions do not advance our non-proliferation objectives in South Asia."

But at Monday's regular department press briefing, deputy spokeswoman Christine Shelly appeared to reverse that view.

She acknowledged the administration proposed to Congress draft legislation that, in revamping U.S. foreign aid for the first time in 30 years, limits all country-specific language in an effort to give the president flexibility in aid decisions.

This includes the 1985 amendment named after Senator Larry Pressler, a South Dakota Republican, that bans aid to Pakistan unless the president can certify Islamabad neither possesses nuclear weapons nor is trying to develop them.

But Ms. Shelly insisted "this does not indicate any weakening in the administration's desire to check nuclear proliferation in South Asia. Pakistan will still continue to be subject

to the sanctions under the administration's proposal."

While the proposal includes provisions for national interest waivers of sanctions, "as a matter of administration policy, satisfaction of the Pressler standard will remain the essential basis for exercising any national interest waiver and for resuming economic and military assistance, including any decision by the U.S. government to sell or transfer military equipment or technology to Pakistan," she said.

Mr. Shelly indicated President Bill Clinton had no plans to waive Pakistan's sanctions, saying: "What we have indicated is that Pakistan would continue to be subject to sanctions along the lines of the Pressler amendment."

Ms. Shelly did not comment publicly on why her statements conflicted with those expressed last Wednesday by Mr. McCurry, who is travelling to Europe with Secretary of State Warren Christopher and was unavailable for immediate comment.

But a senior official said news of the administration's aid proposal broke and was transmitted in a way that I think probably didn't give us a full opportunity to really study it in relationship to the Pressler amendment."

"What is said today reflected a very carefully considered view on exactly what the situation was on Pakistan and... what the administration com-

tions imposed on Belgrade if Bosnia's Serbs gave up more territory to the Muslim-led government.

The CSCE foreign ministers were divided over the Russian bid to take on a peacekeeping role in the conflicts rocking the former Soviet Union.

Diplomats said European Community countries, especially conference host Italy, wanted to give Russia a limited mandate, but Moscow's neighbours such as the Baltic states and Ukraine, as well as Canada, Norway and Turkey, were strongly opposed.

Russian officials said that Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev would again seek support here for Moscow's drive against what it calls "aggressive nationalism."

Also on the agenda was the future of peacekeeping operations in the old Soviet republics and how to encourage Moscow's involvement without ceding it virtual total control of the region.

The conflict in the former Yugoslavia was to be discussed at the end of the cold war could induce a mood of "despair and pessimism."

The CSCE, which focuses on mediation and conflict prevention, had made unsatisfactory progress in the last three years, Mr. Ciampi said, citing the "terrible lesson" of the war in former Yugoslavia.

Without mentioning Russia by name, she said certain states "openly declare that they have their own interests to protect. Understandably, the legacy of history creates some misgivings about the nature of such interests."

Anay agreement, Ms. Uggla said, would have to be based on "the consent of the parties, on an understanding of the tasks and rules of behaviour of the forces concerned and on a supervisory role for CSCE monitors."

Major wins support for secret IRA peace moves

LONDON (AFP) — British Prime Minister John Major got broad support Tuesday for his government's secret peace talks with the outlawed Irish Republican Army (IRA).

But some Conservative politicians warned that talking with one side in the dispute could spur the other to violence.

Following weekend press disclosures, Northern Ireland Secretary Patrick Mayhew laid the government's card on the table in the House of Commons Monday.

He read out secret communiques with the IRA's Sinn Fein political wing dating back to February, and made the strongest peace offer yet: If the IRA "unequivocally" renounces violence, open talks could begin in January.

His words were followed by IRA accusations of "lying" and "counterfeiting" some of the exchanges.

But Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams backed off Tuesday, saying he was prepared to "forgive" the "duplicity" in order to keep the dialogue alive.

Reports meanwhile emerged that the government had told the IRA on Nov. 5 that talks with Sinn Fein could start in January — as long as there was no more killing.

Secret messages between the two sides suggested Mr. Major would be satisfied with a two-and-a-half-month respite from violence as a benchmark of a ceasefire that would clear the way for "exploratory" talks.

Ulster Unionist MP William Ross warned that government contacts with the IRA en-

tailed to the elements of the Pressler amendment would be. It's the question of having five more days to think about it and react to it," he said.

Gen. Pressler was said to be furious at moves to lift the amendment.

Ms. Shelly said she did not know what other countries might be affected by the proposed non-proliferation language.

The Pressler amendment sanctions are aimed at eliminating nuclear weapons from South Asia, but Ms. McCurry acknowledged last week that both Pakistan and its main rival India could develop a nuclear bomb "in a relatively short time frame."

Ms. Shelly did not comment publicly on why her statements conflicted with those expressed last Wednesday by Mr. McCurry, who is travelling to Europe with Secretary of State Warren Christopher and was unavailable for immediate comment.

But a senior official said news of the administration's aid proposal broke and was transmitted in a way that I think probably didn't give us a full opportunity to really study it in relationship to the Pressler amendment."

"What is said today reflected a very carefully considered view on exactly what the situation was on Pakistan and... what the administration com-

mitts imposed on Belgrade if Bosnia's Serbs gave up more territory to the Muslim-led government.

But it was the controversy over Russia and its partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States — successor to the collapsed Soviet Union — that was dominating backstage, diplomats said.

They said EC states were proposing to look at any Russian peacekeeping role case by case, placing strict time and financial limits on any operation authorised.

But the unease of East European and former Soviet states about Moscow stepping into countries which have only recently freed themselves from its control was picked up by Swedish Foreign Minister Margaretha Af Ugglas.

The Italian premier warned members against letting crises slide into open conflict: "It is not realism to hide behind the immediate costs of action without considering the future costs, which are no less real and often heavier than doing nothing."

Pressing an Italian interest, Mr. Ciampi alerted European states to the risk of a "drift towards conflict" in the

China might end talks if Hong Kong moves on reform

HONG KONG (R) — China has signalled that any move by Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten to push ahead with even part of his democratic reform plans will kill any chance of a negotiated settlement with Britain.

There was no clear sign yet of a ceasefire and, in fact, a man believed to be Catholic was shot dead in Belfast early Tuesday in a killing claimed by the outlawed Protestant Ulster Freedom Fighters.

His words were followed by IRA accusations of "lying" and "counterfeiting" some of the exchanges.

"Contrary to some prevailing notions about open government," said the Daily Telegraph, "in the real world secrecy is often an absolute condition of successful negotiations."

Hong Kong's Executive Council, the colony's de facto cabinet, met Tuesday amid speculation Mr. Patten will introduce a mini electoral reform bill to the Legislative Council following the failure of seven months of Sino-British talks to produce any deal.

While China and Britain are holding talks on the one hand, the Legislative Council (the colony's legislature) is discussing and approving something (related) on the other. We just can't continue the talks under that situation," said Mr. Lu, who is director of China's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office.

"If the British side unilaterally tables the package in the Legislative Council, it would create big difficulties for the talks," he told a Hong Kong delegation visiting Beijing.

Mr. Patten first proposed widening democracy before Hong Kong's 1997 return to China more than a year ago, provoking a furious row with Beijing. Last March he published a reform bill but it has never been introduced to the legislature to allow the talks, which began in April, a chance to produce a deal.

The legislature has, however, passed a separate bill setting up a commission to oversee polls and work out electoral boundaries, also one of the original Patten proposals.

The latest slowdown follows the 17th round of talks last week, where the two sides failed to agree even on so-called simple issues. These British interpreters, as cutting the voting age, abolishing government-appointed local councilors and introducing single-member legislative constituencies.

Mr. Patten is expected to introduce a mini-bill on these issues next month. Britain has offered China more talks on the most controversial parts of Mr. Patten's package, which would allow Hong Kong people to elect directly or indirectly, the majority of legislators for the first time in 1995.

Patten gave little away after the Executive Council meeting but indicated he would reveal his next move at a question-and-answer session in the Legislative Council.

"We've considered the outcome of 17 rounds of talks with our Chinese colleagues," he told reporters.



Shabana Azmi (left) the Indian actress who with Mother Theresa received an international human rights award from French President François Mitterrand in 1989, kisses African National Congress President Nelson Mandela after presenting him with a News-makers of the Year Award on behalf of a Cape Town newspaper (AFP photo)

De Klerk criticises rightwingers for setting up alternative government

CAPE TOWN (AFP) — President F.W. De Klerk Tuesday branded as "irresponsible and tragic" attempts by South Africa's far-right white Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF) to set up their own government.

South African news reports Tuesday called the AVF's move a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI).

"How can you think of UDI if you cannot say where the borders of such a state will be?" Mr. De Klerk said after a meeting with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown. "If it wasn't so tragic, it would be amusing."

Throwing down the gauntlet to the government and the African National Congress (ANC), the AVF proposed alternative structures to counter South Africa's multi-party transitional authority (TEC) signed into law by Mr. De Klerk Monday and due to be set up on Dec. 6.

"The announcement is untimely and irresponsible," Mr. De Klerk said. "I do not think my signature on the TEC bill should have been unexpected."

The AVF's move contradicted progress reported by the conservative Freedom Alliance, of which the AVF is a member, in talks Monday with the government to bring rightwingers back to the country's democracy process.

Mr. De Klerk said that in the talks "the question of them becoming part of the TEC

(was) raised."

The alliance is made up of the Inkatha Freedom Party, the Ciskei and Bophuthatswana black homelands as well as the right-wing Conservative Party and the AVF who walked out of democracy talks in July to demand strong federalism and a separate white homeland.

Alliance Chairman Rowan Cronje said there had been "almost total agreement" on changes in the new interim constitution dealing with the powers of the country's nine new provinces.

"We agreed on the framework (of changes), the structures and divisions (of power between levels of government). Now we are refining terminology," he told the Star newspaper.

In a warning to the more extreme elements in the alliance, ANC President Nelson Mandela said that an "anti-fascist front" may have to be formed if far-rightists continued to obstruct South Africa's transition to democracy.

"Those who have been persecuting us have now formed the so-called Freedom Alliance... a group of men who want to maintain minority rule," he told reporters after meeting with Mr. Brown.

"We will not allow them to escape in this regard and if they continue along those lines we will have no alternative but to call for the formation of an anti-fascist front."

Mr. De Klerk, however,

Talks offer no let-up for Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (R) — Rival Bosnian leaders pressed ahead with peace talks in Geneva Tuesday but the besieged city of Sarajevo was pounded by artillery once more.

Bosnia's Muslim-led government warned that the talks could collapse over Serb refusals to negotiate on the basis of a European Community (EC) plan that calls on them to cede land to the Muslims in return for an easing of sanctions.

Bosnia's U.N. ambassador, Mohammad Sacirbey, denied the Muslim delegation was about to walk out, but added: "I believe we have hit a critical stage... we could in fact see a collapse."

In Sarajevo, a U.N. military spokesman reported a marked increase in shelling and small arms fire.

He said mortar bombs and sniper rounds hit the centre of the Bosnian capital Monday as the Geneva talks began. "Sarajevo was unstable due to shelling," Major Desbald Van Biesbroeck told reporters.

Sarajevo Radio said the Muslim-held towns of Olovje and Maglaj were shelled during the night and on Tuesday morning, killing one person and wounding seven.

In Geneva, international mediators were cautious about the chances of Serb, Muslim and Croat leaders clinching a deal.

Peace envoys Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg said that while the three sides were at least talking again, long and hard bargaining would be needed for a negotiated settlement.

Mr. Patten is expected to introduce a mini-bill on these issues next month. Britain has offered China more talks on the most controversial parts of Mr. Patten's package, which would allow Hong Kong people to elect directly or indirectly, the majority of legislators for the first time in 1995.

Patten gave little away after the Executive Council meeting but indicated he would reveal his next move at a question-and-answer session in the Legislative Council.

"We've considered the outcome of 17 rounds of talks with our Chinese colleagues," he told reporters.

"We're not in my view going to get a signed, sealed agreement here in the next few days but I think we may take the process on," Lord Owen, the European Community envoy, told reporters.

Bosnian leaders and their Serb and Croatian backers went into a series of bilateral discussions on a proposed three-way split of the republic along ethnic lines.

The leaders agreed Monday to restart the peace process after two months of deadlock on the basis of a new EC plan offering a gradual easing of sanctions on rump Yugoslavia if the Bosnian Serbs give up some conquered land.

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic began what were expected to be two further days of talks about revising an existing peace plan.

At issue is whether the Bosnian Serbs are ready to cede further land to the Muslims, who want at least three percent more territory in order to create a viable state. The negotiations would also tackle the future status of Sarajevo and Muslim demands for access to the sea, Lord Owen told reporters.

Mr. Karadzic said he was ready to discuss offering the same concessions to the Muslims that his side withdrew when the peace process broke down earlier this year.

In a statement to Serbian Television Monday evening he said the Bosnian Serbs wanted peace and were prepared to help the Muslims create their

N. Korea returns American remains

PANMUNJOM, Korea (AFP)

— North Korea Tuesday returned the remains of 33 U.S. soldiers killed during the Korean War at this border truce village straddling the last front line of the cold war, and warned it might withdraw from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty if high-level talks with Washington were not renewed.

P

Kaddoumi stresses Palestinians' right to return or get compensation

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) foreign affairs chief Farouk Kaddoumi called on the international community Monday to reaffirm the right of Palestinian refugees to return or receive compensation.

In a speech to the General Assembly, he also said the Israeli authorities, in the interest of safeguarding the Middle East peace process, must halt "the abominable acts committed by armed Israeli settlers" against Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Taking part in the annual U.N. debate on the question of Palestine, he said there were now 2.8 million Palestinian refugees, constituting about half of the Palestinian people.

"One-third of them continue to live in refugee camps in the occupied territory and the neighbouring Arab countries."

"This question must be solved in a way that conforms to international legality, specifically, in accordance with paragraph 11 of General Assembly Resolution 194 (III) of 1948, which affirmed their right of return or compensation for those who did not want to return."

Mr. Kaddoumi said that re-



Farouk Kaddoumi

solution, reaffirmed by the assembly year after year, was an "individual, inalienable right that must be distinguished from the right of every Palestinian to Palestinian citizenship and nationality."

Referring to the role played by the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in providing aid, he said: "I call on UNRWA to continue providing this assistance to the Palestine refugees."

Earlier, PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat, a message to a U.N. meeting marking the

annual International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, said the Middle East was poised between democracy, development and prosperity on the one hand, and wars, calamities and Balkanisation on the other hand.

His message, read by PLO U.N. observer Nasser A. Kidwa also reaffirmed the goal of an "independent state with Arab Jerusalem as its capital."

The United Nations will continue to help the Palestinians implement the accord granting them autonomy. Secretary General Boutros Ghali has said.

"Today, International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, symbolises the continuing responsibility of the United Nations towards the Palestinians," he said.

Dr. Ghali set up a U.N. team charged with aiding social and economic development in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In September.

He recently sent a technical team to Tunis and the occupied territories at the request of the PLO to see how the world body could help implement the autonomy accord signed Sept. 13 in Washington.

Ethiopia tries to save Somalia conference

ADDIS ABABA (Agencies) — Ethiopia, anxious to save a U.N. conference on aid to Somalia, is trying to persuade Somali warlord Mohammad Farah Aideed to attend a separate meeting of Somali parties, diplomats said Tuesday.

Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi, host of the U.N. conference boycotted by General Aideed, wants to hold the meeting in Addis Ababa Thursday and hopes it will pave the way for a compromise between Gen. Aideed and the United Nations, they said.

"So far things look pretty set for Thursday. We are told Aideed is willing to come because the meeting will not involve the United Nations," one diplomat told Reuters.

The United Nations opened the conference Monday in an attempt to put relief operations in Somalia back on track.

But Gen. Aideed and his group, the Somali National

Alliance (SNA), said they would not attend. They instead told the United Nations to get out of Somalia.

Mr. Meles, mandated by both regional leaders and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), has mediated several meetings which tried to bring about peace in Somalia.

The aim of the meeting Thursday is also to narrow the differences between Gen. Aideed and his arch-rival, north Mogadishu warlord and self-styled President Ali Mahdi Mohammad.

"It's common knowledge that unless the two men reach some common ground efforts by people such as the U.N. to help Somalia are nothing but a waste of time," one diplomat said.

The Somali factions are expected to have reconciliation efforts on a peace accord signed by 15 factions in Addis Ababa last March. The accord

"The purpose of this confer-

ence was to get all Somali leaders together in order for them to move forward the process of dialogue," Mr. Sheeham said. "We are very, very disappointed that all groups are not represented."

Diplomats have stressed that further international aid increasingly depends on political progress in Somalia, which plunged into clan warfare and famine after the January 1991 ouster of President Mohamed Siad Barre.

"The time is now for the Somali people to reconcile. Aid depends on that," Mr. Sheeham said. "At the same time there has been a great deal accomplished so far."

The dozen factions taking part in the talks on Tuesday discussed the rebuilding and rehabilitation of their Horn of Africa country, as donors stressed that aid would be directed in priority to areas regarded as safe.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel wants multilaterals in Arab states

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel and the United States are trying to persuade Arab states to stage all five tracks of the multilateral talks on the Middle East, a senior foreign ministry official said Tuesday. Washington will officially put forward the proposal on Dec. 15 when the multilateral coordinating committee meets in Tokyo and Israel will support it in the light of the Sept. 13 Palestinian autonomy deal. Egypt has already agreed to hold the session on refugees and Morocco to host the economic talks, the official said. The United States and Israel hope Qatar will stage the arms control talks. Oman water talks and either Bahrain or Jordan the environmental committee. The multilateral talks on regional issues are part of the peace process launched in Madrid in October 1991.

India to train Palestinian paramedics

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India is to train paramedics from the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho and offer scholarships to Palestinian students, Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh said Tuesday. India also plans to provide the autonomous Palestinian authorities in Gaza and Jericho with \$1 million worth of goods. Mr. Singh told a function marking the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. In a message, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao welcomed the Sept. 13 signing of the Palestinian autonomy accord. India is "ready to continue to extend material and technical assistance to the friendly Palestinian people to consolidate their progress towards self-government," he said. He said he hopes all parties in the peace process would take this opportunity to work for a comprehensive settlement which restores to the Palestinian people their legitimate rights."

Settlers set up vigilante force

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Settler leaders launched a campaign Tuesday to recruit hundreds of volunteer guards from Israel to protect Jewish communities in the occupied territories. The move comes ahead of the deployment of the Palestinian police under the autonomy agreement and the scheduled start of the withdrawal of the Israeli army from Gaza and Jericho on Dec. 13. "We are appealing to people to join Hashomer and keep Jewish settlements strong, secure and alive just as Hashomer did before the state (was founded)," said Yechiel Leiter, a spokesman for the council of Jewish communities. The Hashomer watchmen guarded the early Jewish settlements before 1948. "The aim is mainly to defend isolated settlements," said reserve General Yossi Koller, who will be in charge of the operation which he said would be run in cooperation with the army.

Lebanon purges 500 civil servants

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Al Hariri has announced a purge of nearly 500 civil servants accused of corruption under an overhaul of the state administration. The 500 sacked officials are among 4,000 people classified by their ministries as either corrupt, chronically absent, incompetent or superfluous whose fate is being decided by a government commission. Mr. Hariri said after a cabinet meeting late on Monday the government had accepted unchanged the commission's recommendation to dismiss the 500 categorised as corrupt. The government will announce Wednesday how many of about 1,200 workers accused of absenteeism will be fired. The 500 fired for corruption have not been named. They will receive no compensation but can appeal to the council of state, an administrative watchdog body.

Iran warns Kuwait against defence pacts

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's state-run radio Tuesday warned Kuwait to reconsider its policy of signing military pacts with countries outside the region, and called on it to seek regional

solutions for defence. The commentary on Tehran Radio was broadcast the day after Kuwaiti Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Al Sabah signed a defence pact with Russia in Moscow. The agreement includes joint naval manoeuvres by Russia and Kuwait, the first such exercises involving Moscow and a Gulf state. The broadcast said Kuwait's defence agreements with "big powers" such as the United States, Russia, France and Britain were understandable in view of Iraq's 1991 invasion of Kuwait. But it warned such pacts were not "free of charge" and could be used as a pretext for these powers to interfere in Kuwait's internal affairs or to start a conflict with its neighbours.

Vatican prepares Pope's Lebanon visit

BEIRUT (AP) — A Vatican delegation is visiting Lebanon to prepare for a landmark visit here by Pope John Paul II, a spokesman for the papal envoy, Monsignor Pablo Puentel, said Tuesday. The first ever papal visit to Lebanon will take place in the second half of May, according to the official National News Agency. But Mr. Puentel told reporters that no date had been set yet for the visit. The delegation arrived on Sunday for a one-week visit. It is led by Father Roberto Tucci, who organises the Pope's travels abroad, his assistant Emile Tschirgi and Alberto Gaspari, a secular aide.

Velayati meets Hamas official

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's foreign minister has met with a leading member of Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported Tuesday. The state-run agency quoted Minister Ali Akbar Velayati as saying at Monday's meeting that his country's opposition to the peace deal was "unalterable." Iran is opposed of any peace with Israel and calls for its total destruction. It is also a key backer of Hamas. The Hamas official, Musa Abu Marzouk, said the Palestinian peace accord with Israel was doomed to failure because it did not settle the problem of "the occupation of Palestine and the restoration of the rights of its people." Mr. Abu Marzouk, who arrived in Tehran Sunday, said the purpose of his visit was "to exchange views with Iranian officials on the latest developments in the region." Mr. Velayati told Mr. Abu Marzouk there were many pressures on Iran "to change its stand and give up support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian nation." He said "obviously, such disgraceful solutions would not bear fruit."

Denmark turns down PLO embassy request

COPENHAGEN (AP) — Danish Prime Minister Poul Nygaard Rasmussen has turned down a request by Yasser Arafat to grant embassy status to the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) future office in Copenhagen, saying "Denmark recognises states and not governments." Mr. Rasmussen said he told the PLO leader, who was on a 30-hour visit to Denmark, that he considered the PLO "as the representative of the Palestinian people" and that "its representatives could benefit from certain diplomatic rights," but that authorising a proper embassy was "out of the question." The question of diplomatic relations "must be discussed in concertation with the other European Community members," he said. The PLO had an office in Copenhagen between 1987 and 1990, when it was closed for financial reasons brought about by the Gulf war.

Weather stalls Israel-PLO economy talks

PARIS (AP) — The resumption of talks on the economic aspect of the transfer of autonomy to Palestinian authorities in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank was delayed Tuesday by bad weather. The Israeli embassy in Paris said the Israeli delegation was unable to leave Geneva. The talks were suspended here last Thursday, with an agreement to resume Tuesday and continue until Dec. 6.



Armed and masked activists from the Fatah Hawks take to the street as they called to resume their armed struggle against Israel in the Rafah refugee camp Tuesday (AFP photo)

COLUMN

Welsh police
can't afford
royal visits

LONDON (AFP) — Members of Britain's royal family may be asked to stop making official visits to South Wales because police can no longer afford the huge costs of ensuring their safety, press reports said Tuesday. Faced with having to trim between £2 and £4 million (\$3 and \$6 million) from its £131-million (\$195-million) budget, South Wales Constabulary wants all planned royal trips to the region postponed. An emergency police authority meeting Monday agreed that the lords lieutenant of south, mid and west Glamorgan — the queen's local representatives — should be told that royal tours might face cancellation. Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, is due to arrive in the Welsh capital Cardiff later Tuesday to hand out honorary degrees. A further 19 royal visits are planned for the area before April. A Buckingham Palace spokesman said that the royal family still wanted to visit Wales and would take advice from the lords lieutenant. The South Wales force is considering a list of other money-saving options, including an overtime ban, the temporary closure of 22 police stations and the possibility of making 180 officers redundant. "There is no way I want to go down this path. But if I am forced to make cuts of this level then these are the measures I may have to take," he said.

Vasarely sends
back his Legion
D'Honneur

MARSEILLE, France (AFP) — The Hungarian-born French painter Victor Vasarely has sent back his Legion D'Honneur in a bitter protest over the alleged maladministration of the foundation in Aix-en-Provence, southern France, which bears his name. In an open letter to President François Mitterrand and Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, the 85-year-old artist said he was "cut to the quick, in the twilight of my life, to see the state allow unscrupulous officials to plunder my foundation" and denounced the ministers responsible for failing to act, "despite being informed of the gravity of the offences for the past two years." The painter's daughter, the Mujahedeen, has denied any involvement. Passengers from the plane were transferred to Baghdad Tuesday and would return to Iran soon, Iran's IRNA news agency reported.

The plane was first diverted to Kuwait, where the authorities refused landing permission, before heading for Basra. The F-17 was seized after take-off from Gach Saran headed for Ahvaz in the oil province of Khuzestan.

It was the first hijacking of an Iranian plane to Iraq since the end of the two countries' 1980-1988 war. Iran's Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mohammadi, quoted by IRNA, said the Iranian embassy in Baghdad was making arrangements for their return home in cooperation with Iraqi authorities.

Iran on Monday demanded that Iraq return the Fokker F-27 Friendship plane along with all 58 passengers and crew on board — including those responsible for commandeering it earlier in the day.

In Baghdad, there was no official confirmation that the passengers had arrived in the Iraqi capital but sources at the Iranian embassy said that diplomats there were in direct contact with the Iraqi authorities.

Iraq has not said what it plans to do about the plane, the hijacker or the passengers and crew.

A television station run by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday showed pic-

PLO plans scheduled police deployment

By John Halaby
The Associated Press

AMMAN a — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is going ahead with plans to deploy an initial force of around 8,000 policemen and border guards in the Gaza Strip and Jericho when Israeli forces pull out of those areas, a senior official said Tuesday.

Haj Khalid Mismar, chief of the moral guidance department of the proposed Palestinian force, said 1,300 soldiers of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) in Iraq were expected to join 2,500 colleagues in Jordan early next week.

Mr. Mismar, whose office functions as the force's public relations department, told the Associated Press that the units stationed in Iraq had undergone training as border guards and policemen. Their colleagues based in Jordan and Egypt took similar courses.

Under its Sept. 13 accord with the PLO, Israel is expected to begin a partial withdrawal from Gaza and West Bank town of Jericho on Dec. 13.

Palestinians will take over the evacuated areas and will be in charge of local security and border patrols. The proposed police and border force, formally known as central security forces, will carry Kalashnikov machine guns and assault rifles.

However, snags have been reported in the Israel-PLO negotiations in Egypt on power transfer to the Palestinians and security as well as border-control issues.

PLO negotiators have accused Israel of trying to delay agreement before Dec. 13 and thus also postpone the beginning of the withdrawal, expected to be completed by April 13.

Israel has played down the problems, but has left the possibility that the deadline to begin withdrawal could be extended if no agreement was reached with the PLO.

Barring last-minute surprises, the police force will be in Jericho and Gaza on Dec. 13," Mr. Mismar said. "We are not allowing the hurdles placed by Israel in the negotiations to hamper our preparations.

Mr. Mismar said the 3,800-strong units in Jordan and Iraq will regroup in Amman next week and then move down to the Jordan Valley to cross the River Jordan on Dec. 13.

Around the same date, some 4,500 other PLA soldiers will move into the Gaza Strip from Egypt across the Sinai border at Rafah, Mr. Mismar said.

Other PLO officials have given different numbers, but Mr. Mismar, named last week as spokesman for the security forces by PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat, insisted that his figures were the most accurate.

Mr. Mismar said those entering Gaza would be mostly made up of PLA soldiers stationed in Sudan, Libya, Yemen, Egypt and Algeria.

Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal said last week that his country had agreed to the deployment of up to 15,000 Palestinian policemen and guards.

The PLA force will be supplemented by 3,000 recruits from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as remnants of a Palestinian police that operated under Israeli control before disintegrating in 1988 after a Palestinian revolt began in the occupied lands in December 1987.

Iranian hijacker was fleeing repression

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — The hijacker of an Iranian oil ministry plane flown to Iraq was a fireman escaping "repression" in his home country, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported Tuesday.

Ali Reza Karimi, 42, told INA in the southern port city of Basra that he worked for the Iranian Civil Defence Services.

He hijacked the plane to Basra Monday, while it was on a domestic flight in southern Iran with 38 people on board, "to flee the repression suffered by his family at the hands of the Iranian regime," Mr. Karimi was quoted as saying.

The hijacker, accompanied by his wife and five children, has asked for political asylum. Iran wants his extradition, charging the hijacker belonged to the Iranian armed opposition group, Mujahedeen-e-Khalq.

The Mujahedeen had denied any involvement.

Passengers from the plane were transferred to Baghdad Tuesday and would return to Iran soon, Iran's IRNA news agency said.

The plane was first diverted to Kuwait, where the authorities refused landing permission, before heading for Basra. The F-17 was seized after take-off from Gach Saran headed for Ahvaz in the oil province of Khuzestan.

It was the first hijacking of an Iranian plane to Iraq since the end of the two countries' 1980-1988 war. Iran's Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mohammadi, quoted by IRNA, said the Iranian embassy in Baghdad was making arrangements for their return home in cooperation with Iraqi authorities.

Iraq has not said what it plans to do about the plane, the hijacker or the passengers and crew.

A television station run by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday showed pic-

Kurds warn Germany; Turkish jets hit Iraq, France bans 2 groups

BONN (Agencies) — Kurdish groups warned